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ABSTRACT

An introductory unit on Shakespeare suitable for grades 8-10 is described. (The unit is intended for use with "A Visual Guide to Shakespeare's Life and Times" (Washington Square Press) and "Kings, Lovers, and Fools" (Scholastic). Activities include a 3-page study guide on Shakespeare's life and times; a chart for recording the main characters, problems, conflicts, and endings of 10 major Shakespeare plays; scene performances; and a culminating quiz. Students are also involved in performing major scenes from, among others, "As You Like It," "Macbeth," "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "The Taming of the Shrew." (LP)

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GREAT SCENES FROM SHAKESPEARE
an introduction to the Bard.

TO THE TEACHER:

In order to do this unit as planned, you need two paperback books:
A Visual guide to Shakespeare's Life & Times (Washington Square Press)
Kings, Lovers, & Fools, published by Scholastic.
Both books can be purchased from the publisher.
Ideally, one would have a class set, although it would be possible to have students read the books together or in pairs.

I supplemented the readings from Kings, Lovers & Fools with dittoed prose versions of Richard III and Taming of the Shrew. This gave me exactly ten plays with which to work.

The scenes I picked for acting out are personal favorites. Anyone attempting this unit could adapt or change the scenes to suit personal taste.

A further explanation of this unit is in English Journal, March, 1983, page 27 ("Move Over, Marva").

This unit is a good way to introduce better junior high or average ninth/tenth graders to Shakespeare. It familiarizes students with the plots of the more well-known plays and gives them a chance to conquer Shakespearean language in a relatively painless fashion.

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CS 207 572

NAME _____ PERIOD _____

Great Scenes FROM SHAKESPEARE

ACTIVITIES/REQUIRED WORK	PT. VALUE	PTS. EARNED
Shakespeare, His Life & Times worksheet	40 pts.	____
Reading: Kings, Lovers, & Fools		
chart completion	100 pts.	____
test	20 pts.	____
Scene memorization	120 pts.	____
Scene act-out in modern language	120 pts.	____
	400 pts.	____

CALENDAR (subject to change)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Intro unit Shakespeare, Life & Times work---------		Read: Kings, Lovers & Fools		
Sign up for scenes. Begin work----------			Begin scene performance	
Scene performance until finished				

400-360=A
359-320=B
319-280=C ← GRADES

PURPOSES OF UNIT:

1. To give students a general acquaintance with a few of Shakespeare's most famous plays.
2. To give students an appreciation of the time of history in which Shakespeare wrote -- how people lived; the state of the theater at that time; the social/class structure in England during the Elizabethan era.
3. To provide students with an opportunity to learn one scene well and to show understanding of the scene by performance in modern language.

NAME _____ PERIOD ____

Shakespeare's Life & Times

40 PTS

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS using the book, A Visual Guide to Shakespeare's Life and Times. Before each question or set of questions is a page number reference. Answer in complete sentences!!

1. (4) William Shakespeare was born in _____ in _____shire in _____. Shakespeare's father's business was:

2. (22-6) Describe the type of education Shakespeare would have received as a young boy.

3. (30-2)What type of countryside was around Shakespeare's boyhood home -- and how did it influence his writing?

4. (36) What was probably Shakespeare's first taste of dramatic productions?

5. (44-6) Shakespeare married _____ in _____(year). His three children were named _____, _____, and _____. After being married for awhile, Shakespeare set out for greater opportunities in _____ (city).

6. (50-83) Describe the following aspect of life in London in Shakespeare's time:
   Size of the city population:

   Type of industry & trade in London:

   Main thoroughfares and city protection:

   Travel within the city:

   Punishment of offenders of the law:

   Plays:

   Taverns and lowlife:

   The influence of sailors:

   The Tower of London:

7. (96-100)
What was the status of actors when Shakespeare first arrived in London?

Why did actors find it necessary to seek the protection of a nobleman?

Shakespeare belonged to a group of actors known first as Lord _____ Men, and later known as _____. When James I became King of England, Shakespeare's group was known as _____ _____, because the actors were under the protection of the king himself.

8. (110) Give three examples of the many talents of an actor in Shakespeare's time:
a.

b.

c.

9. (118) What were the first "playhouses"?

10. (120-21) Why were early playhouses on the outskirts of the city?

11. (124) In 1598, Shakespeare's group built The _____, the most famous of all Elizabethan playhouses.

12. (128-33) Describe the following parts of an Elizabethan theater:
Stage:

Trapdoor:

Inner Stage:

Upper Stage:

"The Heavens":

"Tiring House":

13. (136) The only covered portions of an Elizabethan theater were the _____ and the _____. The people who sat in the "yard" were called _____.
How would people know a play was being performed that day?

14. (148, 157-8) The monarch on the throne when Shakespeare first came to London was Queen _____. Two famous courtiers at that time were _____, who established the colony of _____ in the New World, and the Earl of _____, who lost his head in an attempted rebellion against the queen.

15. (163-4) Queen Elizabeth died in _____ and was succeeded by _____.

16. (178) Why is the Renaissance period important in European history?

17. (183) What were beliefs in witchcraft in Shakespeare's time -- and what part did witches play in Shakespeare's plays?

18. (188) In Shakespeare's time, people believed that a person's disposition was determined by the presence of certain amounts of _____. What would be the result of a lot of or too much...
blood?

choler?

melancholic humor (black bile)?

phlegm (whitish mucus)?

19. (200-2) How did your social standing affect the clothing you wore?

20. (206) How had the social status of women improved in Shakespeare's time?

How had the lot of women <u>not</u> improved?

21. (210) What do we know about Shakespeare's method of writing?

22. (228-234) How did Shakespeare spend his later years?

Why do some people think Shakespeare disregarded his wife in his will?

NAME _____

CHART. FOR STORY READING

Complete this chart as you are reading the stories from Shakespearean plays in your collection.

PLAY TITLE	COMEDY OR TRAGEDY?	MAIN CHARACTERS	PROBLEM OR CONFLICT	ENDING
Macbeth				
Julius Caesar				
Hamlet				
Romeo and Juliet				
As You Like It				
Othello				

TITLE	COMEDY OR TRAGEDY	MAIN CHARACTERS	PROBLEM OR CONFLICT	ENDING
Antony and Cleopatra				
A Midsummer Night's Dream				
Richard III				
Taming of the Shrew				

NAME _____ PERIOD _____

Quiz - Kings, Lovers, & Fools

1. Which of the following were lovers? (Circle)

Romeo & Juliet
Richard III and Queen Elizabeth
Antony & Cleopatra
Macbeth & Lady Macduff
Katharina & Petruchio
Othello & Desdemona

2. Which let ambition get the better of them?

Richard III
Othello
Brutus
Hamlet
Macbeth
Claudius (Hamlet's uncle)

3. Which two plays feature a play within a play?

As You Like It
Macbeth
Hamlet
Midsummer Night's Dream
Taming of the Shrew

4. Match the characters below with the correct description:

a. Iago
b. Petruchio
c. Romeo
d. Rosalind
e. Puck
f. Macbeth
g. Hamlet
h. Richard III
i. Antony
j. Cleopatra

____ Falls in love with a girl from the wrong family
____ Dresses as a boy and goes into the forest
____ Spreads vicious gossip about a man's wife
____ Queen with tremendously captivating charms
____ A mischief maker who lives in the forest
____ A man willing to marry any woman for money.
____ Avenges the death of his father
____ Delivers a stirring speech at Caesar's funeral.
____ Lets a witches' prophesy and wife's encouragement awaken his own ambition.
____ A wicked man who lets nothing, even his own relatives, stand between him and the throne of England.

Scene Performance

We will be performing famous scenes from each of the play/stories we have read. Note how many people are required to perform each scene. When you sign up, the size of group must exactly equal the number of players.

Your performance will involve two tasks:

(1) You and your group will first perform the scene in modern language. You may use props, puppets, shadow box, whatever you wish.

(2) You and your group will then have to perform the original Shakespearean scene from memory. You will hate it now, but you will thank me for it later!

These are the scenes:

Play:	Scene Description/Famous Lines:
As You Like It (3)	"All the world's a stage..." Jacques and the Duke are philosophizing in the forest during their outlaw period.
Macbeth (3)	"Double, double, toil and trouble..." The witches are cooking up trouble against Macbeth and co.
Othello (2)	"I will kill thee and love thee after..." Othello kills his wife Desdemona in a jealous rage.
Richard III (3)	"A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse..." Richard III's last words and the peace speech of Richmond
Julius Caesar (6)	"Friends, Romans, Countrymen..." Antony gives Caesar's eulogy.
Midsummer (10)	"O Pyramus!" The hilarious Pyramus and Thisbe play-within-a-play performed by Quince and friends for the court.
Hamlet (2)	"To be, or not to be, that is the question." Hamlet contemplates suicide and suggests Ophelia go to a nunnery.
Romeo & Juliet (2) (2)	"Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo?" "Good night, parting is such sweet sorrow..." The famous balcony scene, where Romeo secretly visits Juliet by her balcony. Since this is such a long scene, two people will do the first part; two others will do the second.
Shrew (3)	"I say it is the moon..." Petruchio is getting Katharine to always agree with him, even if he is wrong. This is a test of his success at "taming the shrew."
Antony & Cleopatra (3)	"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety." Enobarbus rhapsodizes about Cleopatra's beauty and hold over men -- in this case, Antony.